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larger *Sittlichkeit* such as may furnish a sanction for international obligation "which has not hitherto," he adds, "attracted attention in connection with international law."

The case might, perhaps, have been strengthened had the Lord Chancellor felt himself at liberty to refer to the sense of community of life, traditions, and destiny that is growing up so hopefully between the group of nations which constitute the British Empire. And in this connection it might be advantageous to supplement Lord Haldane's address by a perusal of Lord Milner's speeches. Imperial unity is no bad seed-plot for a still more comprehensive *Sittlichkeit*. It might at any rate help to bridge the distance between the non-imperial nation, on the one side, and, on the other, the group of independent nations amongst which ties are still so sadly lacking. To dwell on this, however, would, perhaps, have been somewhat inappropriate to the occasion with which Lord Haldane had to deal. And even leaving it altogether out, it is much to have before us, in exposition so lucid, the grounds which a statesman and a thinker has to offer for his sane vision of a future towards which it is evident he believes the world to be moving. No reader of the address can reasonably deny that it is, at very least, a vision which may well make men think and hope.

JOHN MACCUNN.

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A HISTORY OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT. By J. B. Bury, M.A., F.B.A. London: Williams & Norgate. (Home University Library Series.) Pp. 256.

This brilliant book is particularly timely at the present moment when, in England at least, there are indications that the tide of rationalism which, in the nineteenth century, seemed likely to overwhelm all the old landmarks of prejudice and superstition, is stagnant at last, if it has not actually begun to ebb. Quite recently we have had a number of prosecutions for blasphemy under a law which, as Professor Bury observes, is never put in motion except against the poor and ignorant. Clerical influence continues to make reform of the cruel and antiquated English divorce law impossible. Public opinion is apathetic in face of all attempts to abolish the censorship which shackles our drama. The churches, in spite of their dissensions,

and although they have watered down their creeds, show an increasing tendency to interfere in private life, dictating to the humbler classes in such matters as their recreations and their drinks. An unofficial but none the less effective censorship tightens its hold on the book trade, and there are other ominous signs of a general revival of moral taboos. Prof. Bury, though alive to the possibility of a set-back, is inclined to think that "the most important conclusion ever reached by men,"—the conviction, namely, that it is a mistake to repress the free expression of opinion,—is, short of a cataclysm, too firmly established in European civilization to be overthrown, and he argues that the reign of reason, fortified as it is by all the facts discovered by science, is now far more impregnable than it was in classical antiquity. He is perhaps a little too optimistic. No future religious revival, indeed, is likely to destroy the belief that persecution for opinion is wrong, but unfortunately this is a belief which it is easier to serve with the lips than to act upon. No doubt there is a widespread and deep-rooted tendency to act upon it, up to a certain point; but that point fluctuates with fatal ease. The world has become extraordinarily lenient towards all expressions of opinion; whatever a man may say, there is no power to bring him to the stake for his words, nor need he even suffer social persecution for them. But toleration of speech does not necessarily carry with it toleration of actions, and there are many who think that public opinion is developing a kind of tyranny in dealing out moral reprobation for what a man does or omits to do, which may prove the first stage in a general reaction. Take the case of marriage. It is no easier to-day, it is perhaps harder than it was a generation ago, for a man and woman who honestly disapprove of that institution to live openly together without the legal tie. Everyone is free to write or speak against marriage without serious blame, but, if the tendency to require conformity to conventional morals increases, even this freedom may presently be withdrawn.

If it is true that Prof. Bury is shouting before we are fairly out of the wood, it is easy to see what has made him so incautious. The reason is that he is preoccupied with one special department of freedom, namely, freedom of thought in religion, which, he says, "may be taken as the thermometer of freedom of thought in general." That is certainly true of the past, and nothing could be better than his witty, concise review of the

long struggle of the churches to repress the speculators and men of science. As the iniquitous catalogue, spiced with a raillery which makes denunciation superfluous, unfolds itself in these pages from a great scholar's hand, so simply written yet so suggestive of an arsenal of learning in the background, we almost feel as if the age of Voltaire or of Gibbon had returned. Such performances are rare in these days of accommodation between religion and science, and when they occur in a popular series they are doubly to be welcomed. No one can quarrel with Prof. Bury's thesis that the habit of accepting religious beliefs on authority has impeded progress in the past, and that the abandonment of that habit was the first necessary condition of advance. For, in the first place, the beliefs which it was impious to question included beliefs on questions properly belonging to science, the independent investigation of which paved the way for useful discoveries. And, secondly, the skeptics were forced in self-defense to preach toleration, and the welfare of society depends, as Mill argued, on the extent to which toleration becomes a fixed and universal habit. But it is to be noted that, even if the Bible and the Vatican are permanently discredited, it by no means follows either that science will advance indefinitely, or that the beneficent habit of toleration is permanently established. Progress and toleration both depend on social conditions, as Prof. Bury notes, reminding us that during some three centuries before the establishment of Christianity, Greek science made no new discoveries, and that there are other subjects besides the mystery of the Trinity or the authority of the Church capable of inspiring men with that fanaticism which turns the mildest into persecutors. It is, therefore, on the whole surprising that he should be so elated by the fact that the most advanced unorthodoxy is nowadays perfectly respectable almost everywhere except at Rome. The quality of his jubilation, as with deadly skill he reviews the mistakes and humiliations of the enemy, makes his every page delightful. But, we anxiously ask as we close the book, are we really safe?

The question is too large to discuss in a review. We can only say that, if all influential men had something of Prof. Bury's temper of mind, there would be no need for misgiving. Since Mill, no one has stated so clearly and forcibly the argument for the supreme social importance of liberty. If in one instance

he seems to speak with a doubtful voice, it is not from any failure to grasp the true ethical justification for toleration,—that it can never be right to coerce the expression of opinion because, though in particular cases the opinions propagated may do harm, breach of the rule will generally do still more harm in the long run. I do not know whether Prof. Bury would admit any exception to this rule, but it is curious that there is one historical breach of it, the persecution of the Christians by the Roman emperors, which he refrains from testing by the principle of toleration. While he says that the persecutions were wrong because they were unsuccessful, he does not explicitly say that even if they had been successful, they would have been wrong. Another difficult question on which he touches is that as to what beliefs may reasonably be accepted on authority and what not. His remarks on this head are in accordance with common sense, and his advice that the distinction should be impressed upon children as early in life as possible is admirable. It is not easy, indeed, to be sure exactly what the distinction is, but the greater the number of parents that try to be clear about it and to act on Prof. Bury's suggestion, the brighter the hope for the future of civilization will be. “‘Children distrust your parents’ is the first commandment with promise:” it is inspiring to find a Regius Professor at one of our ancient universities sounding this note, like a trumpet-call, at the end of a damaging attack on religion.

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PSYCHE'S TASK: A Discourse Concerning the Influence of Superstition on the Growth of Institutions. Second Edition, revised and enlarged, to which is added The Scope of Social Anthropology: An Inaugural Lecture. By J. G. Frazer. London: Macmillan & Co., 1913. Pp. xi, 186.

“Psyche's Task” is to sort out the seeds of good from the seeds of evil. In the course of lectures to which Dr. Frazer has given this title, his object is to pick out the seeds of good in the record of superstition. His “sinister client,” he allows, is nevertheless condemned to death, though the sentence will not be executed in our time. The lecture on “The Scope of Social Anthropology,” added to the new and enlarged edition, somewhat cor-